

## HOLIDAY BOOKS.

## HAVARD'S SPLENDID WORK.

**DICTIONNAIRE DE L'AMEUBLEMENT** depuis le XIII<sup>e</sup> Siècle jusqu'à nos jours. Par Henri Havard. Paris: Académie des Beaux-Arts.

New-York: T. W. Bouton.

**THE CHOUANS.** By H. de Balzac. With 100 engravings on wood by Leveillé, from drawings by Julien Le Blant. Newly translated into English by George Saintsbury. Small folio, pp. 418. Cassell & Co.

**THE SUN DIAL.** By Austin Dobson. 8vo. pp. 180. Illustrated. Dodd, Mead & Co.

**LADY MARIE AU DIABLE.** From the French of George Sand. By Frank Hunter Potter. Illustrated. Dodd & Mead.

**LONDON STREET ARABS.** By M<sup>r</sup>. H. M. Stanley (Dorothy Tennant). Cassell & Co.

**A SELECTION FROM THE SONNETS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.** 8vo. pp. 90. Harper & Brothers.

If ever an author has been entitled to exclaim "Exegi monumentum," it is certainly M. Henri Havard, the eminent official of the Government Department of Fine Arts at Paris, who has just brought out the fourth and concluding volume of his superb "Dictionnaire de l'Améublement et de la Décoration depuis le XIII<sup>e</sup> Siècle jusqu'à nos jours." The work, although then unfinished, was awarded, last year, the prize of honor by the Academy of Fine Arts. It is one which is unprecedented in its kind and represents the labor of no less than fifteen years on the part of the greatest living authority in Europe on all questions of modern and ancient decorative art. The present volume runs from P to Z, and describes not only things which are in current use, but also many objects no longer met with in our days. It contains over a thousand vignettes, including sixty large plates, executed by celebrated artists. A study of these plates remind one of the portraiture in "Lamarat's Confidences," in which he depicts the progress of human intelligence and admits only its transformation. When glancing over the pages of M. Havard's grand work it will certainly be admitted that the drawings and sculpture of olden times have never been surpassed. The sight of the many beautiful things made so long ago cannot fail to stimulate the imagination of any artist, and is destined to render immense service to the industrial and decorative art of the present time. The French Government has recognized the value of the "Dictionary" by liberally subscribing toward the enormous expenses incurred by the author in its publication, and the city of Paris has likewise contributed a large sum to the same purpose.

In order to give an idea of the vast amount of ground covered by the author, it is sufficient to state that the letter P includes the headings Paper, Panel, Pastel, Persia, Perspective, Plate, Pedestal, Portal, Portières, Porcelain, etc., etc. The book is got up in faultless style, is a work of which French art and literature may well be proud, and will, without a doubt, immediately take its place among the classics of art. It is a work which every one endowed with taste and artistic instincts should include in his library.

As to form this handsome edition of Balzac's "Chouans" is a reproduction of the Testard "Collection Artistique" issue, and is illustrated by the same woodcuts from the designs of Julien Le Blant. It has in addition an introduction by the translator, Mr. George Saintsbury, wherein a rather cold and unappreciative view of Balzac is presented, together with some evidence that Mr. Saintsbury has not studied his subject with thoroughness. The translation itself is, however, generally excellent. The "Chouans" was the first of Balzac's novels to arrest public attention, and Mr. Saintsbury is quite right in saying that it marks a formative period in his career. His manner and his method were alike inchoate, and the composition of the story sufficiently indicates this. But taking fully into account all its imperfections, the "Chouans" remains a very powerful and impressive work. It can hardly be doubted that Victor Hugo owed some of the ideas of his "Ninety-three" to Balzac's story, the relations between Hulot and Corentin, in particular, being almost parallel in the later tale. The scene is laid in Brittany, in the year 1799, and the motive is a last attempt of the emigrant nobles to rouse and maintain an active insurrection against the Republic. The study of the Breton peasants who composed the Chouannerie is a wonderful piece of work. Balzac wrote the book at Forges, in the heart of the country he describes in it, and every local touch in its pages is minutely faithful to fact.

The Chouans were the most backward of all the French peasantry. Blindly superstitious, densely ignorant, and marked by an animal courage and a dogged endurance capable of almost anything vitally to facilitate insurrection, by making it impossible to empty masses of troops in the work of repression. The whole cultivable area was cut up into small fields, divided one from the other, not by ordinary hedges, but by stout clay walls six feet high. In the fields also there were abundance of birch bushes, which were just the thing for ambuscades, and the effect of these was that thousands of armed men might be scattered about, yet wholly invisible, and that all attempts to bring the Chouans to open battle were foredoomed to failure. The lingering character of the civil war in La Vendée was mainly due to these circumstances. The Vendees were, however, more chivalrous than the Chouans. The latter fought in a calculating spirit, notwithstanding their devotion to their priests and leaders. They always sought to economize life, to kill without risk to themselves, and to obtain plunder. The war was savage in the extreme. No quarter was given on either side as a rule, and both mutilation and torture were freely practised by the Chouans. Balzac gives a marvellously vivid picture of this sanguinary struggle, in which the "Blues" or troops of the Republic, were often at great disadvantage. But the chief interest of the story lies in one of the most singular contests in fiction—a kind of prolonged duel between two women, both of whom are in love with the same man, and the Chouan leader, the Marquis of Montaurier.

The character of Mlle. de Verneuil is extremely complex, as her career has been extremely checkered. Sent from Paris by Fouche to ensnare and betray the Chouan chief, she begins by falling in love with her intended victim, but being repulsed and thrown back upon herself she resolves to carry out the original programme: only to be halted by a fresh access of tenderness, and again revolted by rebuffs and misunderstandings. The other woman, who goes by the name of Madame de Guin, is more simple. She hates and repeatedly tries to kill her rival. The drama increases in excitement as it draws to a close. The Chouan campaign proves a failure. Hulot is too strong and vigilant for them. All through the movement appears the sinister figure of Corentin, one of Fouche's superior police agents, whose function it is to watch Mlle. de Verneuil, and who is resolved to gain her for himself. A man without scruples, principles or affections, he comes as near to the orthodox conception of a devil as could well be presented; and his infernal deceit and treachery prove too much in the end for the poor girl, who matches herself against his cold and pitiless craft. The denouement is intensely dramatic, and the final scene of the tragedy is full of deepest pathos and marked by that terseness of expression which genius alone knows how to employ in the most striking and effective way. "The Chouans" in its English dress and with its spirited illustrations deserves a share of popular favor, and in Mr. Saintsbury's careful and faithful version the reader loses little of the force of the original.

The quarto containing Austin Dobson's "Sun Dial" is illustrated with drawings and decorations by George Wharton Edwards. The artist has evidently undertaken this work as a labor of love, and has lavished fancy upon the decorations, while putting all his imagination and spirit into the drawings. The general result is decided, fresh and original, and from the strikingly ornamental cover to the last page the reader will find something novel to admire or something graceful to pore over.

Dodd & Mead issue a tastefully bound and decorated quarto translation of George Sand's "La

"Mare au Diable," by Frank Hunter Potter, with fourteen of the seventeen etchings made by Edouard Rudeaux for the Quadrato edition which was issued in their series "Les Chefs-d'Oeuvre du Roman Contemporain." The translation of Mr. Potter is close and spirited. The story is one of the most simple and charming studies of rural life made by the author, and the illustrations are such as one seldom encounters in England or American books. The publishers have done their part to render this a desirable gift-book.

"Most of the pictures I had been of ragged life," writes Mrs. Stanley (by way of introduction to her "London Street Arabs"), "appeared to me false and made up. They were all so deplorably piteous—pale, whining children, with sunken eyes, holding up bunches of violet to heedless passers-by, dying match girls, sorrowful water-cress girls, and emaciated mothers clasping weeping babies. How was it, I asked myself, that the other side is so seldom represented? The merry, reckless, happy-go-lucky urchin, the tomboy girl, the plump, untidy mother tossing her ragged baby. Murillo's beggar boys most nearly approached my ideal, but where was the modern Murillo?" Miss Dorothy Tennant, in a modest, diffident way determined to supply this want, and to devote her attention to portraying the cheery side of the ragamuffin's life. It must be confessed that she has succeeded in her self-appointed task. The happy, homely, and droll manner in which, both with brush and pen, she has portrayed the little Arabs of the London streets goes straight to the heart.

Like all true artists, Mrs. Stanley is far from sharing the satisfaction which the public has displayed concerning her pictures. "How I wish," she exclaims, "I could draw my little ragamuffins as I see them—but there is such a wide chasm between conceiving and carrying out." The true artistic spirit again appears when she declares that "no ragamuffin is ever vulgar or common. If the pictures render him so, it is the fault of the artist, since the latter always reflects his own character in his work. All his vulgarity and affectations go into the drawing, just as simplicity, dignity and love of truth are to be found in the work if found in the artist."

The letterpress of Mrs. Stanley's book is emblazoned with many characteristic anecdotes of her little ragged friends. One of her little models whom she asked to define a gentleman replied with considerable fervor: "Oh, a fellow what's a 'watch and chain.'" Reading disapprovingly on her face, he hastily added, "and who loves Jesus."

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